



Nepal

Bringing Reproductive Health to Remote Communities

Since 1998, CEDPA has worked with five partner organizations — Nepal Red Cross Society (NRCS), Family Planning Association of Nepal (FPAN), Aamaa Milan Kendra (AMK), Junior Red Cross Society, and SAMANATA — to expand access to and delivery of family planning (FP), reproductive health (RH), child survival (CS), and HIV/AIDS prevention services. Through these partnerships, CEDPA worked to promote an enabling environment to support women's informed decision making about RH issues.

To improve access and utilization of RH and FP services, CEDPA supervised and trained female community-based distributors (CBDs) in communication skills to enhance their ability to counsel couples in selecting the appropriate FP method. CEDPA also provided clinical RH services in the project areas.

Increased Contraceptive Use through Enhancing Communication Skills

NRCS implemented the Reaching and Enabling Women to Act on RH Decisions (REWARD) project to contribute to the objectives of Nepal's National Reproductive Health Strategy. In this project, NRCS initiated the formation of Communication Action Groups (CAGs), women's groups that meet monthly to discuss RH issues. Composed solely of married women of reproductive age, CAGs have successfully increased communication between couples about contraception and have mobilized communities to seek RH and FP services.

- There are 495 CAGs in 85 Village Development Committees with nearly 10,000 active members. There are 595 CBDs providing contraceptives and making referrals for RH and child health clinical services.



- CBDs have been effective change agents. Over 90 percent of the women in the project areas have used temporary methods to limit births.
- Since 1993, contraceptive prevalence rates have more than doubled in the three districts where CAGs operate.
- Through direct delivery and referral services, 41,290 couple years of protection (CYP) have been generated by the project.

In addition to the success of the CAGs:

- NRCS and FPAN, in collaboration with World Education International, provided basic literacy classes and RH information to nearly 14,000 women.
- CEDPA initiated National Condom Day in Nepal. For six years, it led a broad coalition of groups that organized local, district, and national activities to commemorate the day. In 2002, CEDPA handed over

the coordinating role to the NRCS, ensuring that this event will continue beyond the life of the ENABLE project.

Community-Based Distribution Models

FPAN, in its delivery of FP and RH services, used a two-tiered CBD model that included a mentoring component. CEDPA and FPAN provided first-tier female CBDs with five days of training. Second-tier CBDs, who serve as supervisors for the first-tier, were trained for an additional 10 days to gain more in-depth knowledge of FP methods. Between 1998-2002, 810 CBDs were trained to provide RH information and services to their communities.

Providing Family Life Education to Adolescents

AMK implemented the Adolescent Girls Literacy Initiative for RH project, which provided literacy and family life education in a discussion group format. In this project, Adolescent Girls' Groups (AGGs) were formed to:

- Increase girls' use of youth-friendly, age-appropriate RH information and services;
- Provide girls with non-formal and formal educational opportunities; and
- Improve the girls' knowledge of their rights, thereby strengthening their capacity to advocate for policy that directly affects young girls.

Out of the 891 girls who participated in AGGs, 528 have enrolled in formal school. Of those who have not enrolled in formal schooling, most are participating in post-literacy classes.

The Junior Red Cross Society organized Youth Action Groups (YAGs), which brought together male adolescents to discuss sexually-transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS prevention. Although this intervention was



short, it generated considerable interest in organizing such groups for male adolescents.

Advocating for Safe Motherhood

CEDPA facilitated the development of the Safe Motherhood Network (SMN), which seeks to create awareness and advocacy for safe motherhood. The SMN Nepal Secretariat, which was housed at CEDPA, has been transferred to a local organization. SMN Nepal has 140 members, representing non-governmental and community-based organizations, government agencies, and international organizations. SMN has been recognized by the Nepali government and it now plans to expand its activities to the district level.

SMN Nepal was the first national safe motherhood organization; its approach has been replicated in several countries. Recently, SMN won the Third Annual White Ribbon Alliance contest.

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